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ABSTRACT

As part of New Zealand's Teacher Career and Promotion Study, a questionnaire was completed by 1,829 elementary and secondary school teachers. Four areas affecting women's representation in senior teaching positions are examined: length of service, family constraints, promotion experience, and career aspiration. More men than women had completed the required 10 unbroken years of teaching experience for promotion to senior status. Of those eligible for promotion, 24 percent of the female primary teachers and 11 percent of the female secondary teachers had not applied for promotion, compared to two percent of the male secondary teachers and none of the male primary teachers. The female primary teachers had the lowest promotion rate, 64.8 percent. The most frequently cited reason for not seeking promotion was insufficient service time and contentment with present jobs. More men than women reported receiving encouragement for career advancement. The lower career aspirations held by women may be a realistic assessment of their promotion situation. Although most teachers thought that teaching ability should be the most important consideration for promotion, fewer women than men thought that ability affected promotion decisions. (FG)

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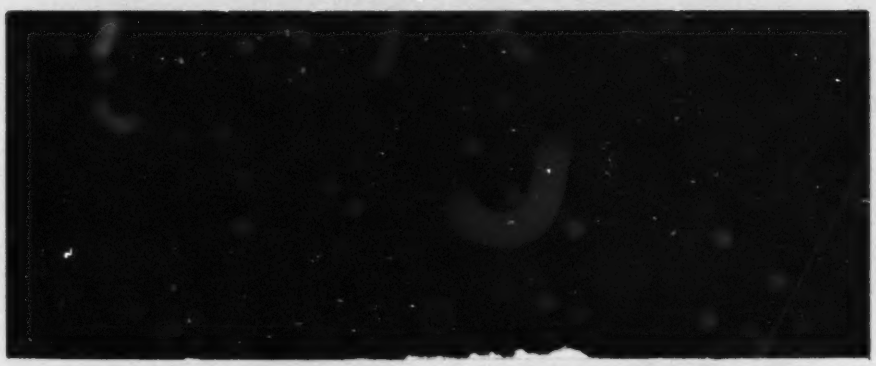

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SP 019 438

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY TEACHING IN NEW ZEALAND

A paper presented at the second National Conference of the New Zealand Association for Research in Education, Massey University, Palmerston North, 28 - 30 November 1980.

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by J E Whitcombe

An Investigation of the Position of Women in Primary and Secondary Teaching in New Zealand

An interim report on the final phase of the Teacher Career and Promotion Study, a questionnaire survey of a five percent sample of men and women teachers in State schools.

The Teacher Career and Promotion Study was mounted to investigate the disproportion of women in senior teaching positions and to examine some possible reasons for this situation. The project has encompassed four phases. The first three phases were analyses of the position of women in both primary and secondary teaching using available statistics and case study interviews with 48 men and women teachers.

This paper concentrates on the fourth phase, a questionnaire survey of 1829 teachers which was mounted in November 1979. The schedule contained fifty questions and sought information on teachers' backgrounds, career moves, promotion experiences, constraints encountered, family situation, in-service course attendance history, knowledge of regulations, involvement in teacher organisations, opinions of women in senior positions and future aspirations.

A review of all the findings is not possible within the context of this paper. The paper will therefore concentrate on some of the reasons why women are not represented in senior teaching positions in greater numbers (see Table 1). To do this four particular areas of the questionnaire will be focussed on. These are: length of service, family constraints, promotion experience and career aspirations.

Table 1: Proportion of Teachers holding Senior Positions in State Schools

		% women at March 1980
Primary:	Principal	5.9
	Deputy Principal	17.0
	Senior Teacher Junior Classes	85.8
	Senior Teacher	53.6
	(All Teachers)*	(63.9)
Secondary:	Principal	10.4
	Deputy or Associate Principal	15.9
	Senior Master/Mistress	62.2
	PR 4	9.6
	PR 3	13.6
	PR 2	24.8
	PR 1	35.8
	(All Teachers)*	(39.0)

* excludes part-time teachers who are predominantly women.

Length of Teaching Service

In an analysis of the position of women in any system - be it in education, the public service, scientific research - most women are generally behind male colleagues of similar age because of broken service due to child rearing. The expected relationship between sex and years of service was sustained by the survey data with a stronger relationship in the primary service. Of the primary women, 37% had over 10 years service, compared with 64% of the primary men. In the secondary service the difference between the sexes was less - 24% of women and 38% of men having over 10 years service. This is the group potentially eligible for senior positions.(1)

When those teachers with the required length of service to be able to hold senior positions are compared, more men than women are eligible in terms of service with the difference more pronounced in the primary service.

(1) In primary teaching a grading system operates with 6 years of teaching required before application can be made for a personal report at the B level and 13 years for a C level report. A high assessment on a C report is needed to win a principal's position at a medium to large primary school. In secondary teaching the minimum period required before a teacher can be appointed to a principal's position is 13 years.

Those teachers who are in senior positions are shown as a percentage of teachers of that sex (see Table 2). Again the proportion of women is below that of men teachers and the position of women in the primary service beomes even more dismal when compared with that of women in the secondary service.

Table 2: Women and Men Teachers holding Senior Positions as a Percentage of Teachers of that Sex (at March 1980)

		Women %	Men %
Primary:	Principals	1.0	31.3
	Senior Teachers, STJC, Deputy and Principal	9.1	47.3
	Total Number of Teachers	*11501*	*6488*
Secondary:	Principal, deputy and Senior Master/Mistress	5.6	8.6
	Position of Responsibility	18.5	37.6
	PRs up to and including Principal	24.1	46.2
	Total Number of Teachers	*4385*	*6854*

Family Related Constraints

Perhaps the most frequently advanced reason for the lack of women in senior positions in teaching is that they are bringing up children and are therefore unable to pursue a career. A recent NUT survey of 3000 women teachers in England and Wales[2] found that only 28% of women teachers had small children and the majority of the women were career-minded.

The NZ data showed that 62% of primary women and 56% of secondary women had no children or none at home. If having a pre-school child is taken as a constraint then 7% of the primary women and 9% of the secondary women are thus constrained. If the definition of constraint is extended to include those with children of primary age and younger, then the proportions become 26% of primary and 29% of secondary women teachers. In New Zealand, therefore, less than 30% of women teachers in the survey had children of primary age or younger.

(2) New Society 20 March 1980

Another frequently advanced reason, to explain the absence of women from senior positions, is their immobility - they are tied by their husband's work. In the survey teachers were asked whether family constraints or personal commitments had caused them to remain in one place and thus restricted from promotion opportunities.

Teachers who identified such constraints were:-

38% of the primary men
32% of the secondary women
28% of the primary women
and 27.5% of the secondary men.

The constraints mentioned were grouped into the broad categories of:- spouse related, children related, parents, housing, personal, family (general), other, and combinations.

Table 3: Some identified Mobility Constraints to Career Development

		Women %	Men %
Primary:	Spouse related	36.8	10.2
	Children related	26.9	31.2
	Family (general)	12.4	20.3
	Total number of teachers giving any constraint	*169*	*110*
Secondary:	Spouse related	38.9	19.3
	Children related	26.2	12.0
	Family (general)	6.0	26.7
	Total number of teachers giving any constraint	*125*	*131*

Spouse related reasons were the main constraint named by women in both services. These reasons were usually in connection with their husbands' work situation. However, men also gave spouse as a reason - in these cases their wives' work or a wife not wishing to move were the reasons given. In both services a higher proportion of men than women gave children and family as a constraint. From the case study interviews it was apparent that for primary men especially, the importance of an urban family base for their children's secondary education overrode promotion considerations. The survey data showed children's education as the most

frequently mentioned constraint, again for primary men more than secondary. (The reason for the service difference is that secondary schools are usually located in larger centres and therefore rural isolation is not so prevalent.)

To place the situation in perspective it must be remembered that well over sixty percent of teachers recorded no constraints. Those women citing husband's job or career, represented 11% of primary and 13% of secondary women teachers. When constraints are looked at overall there is little difference between the sexes. It would appear that for women teachers the constraint provided by young children and husband's work is insufficient reason to explain their lack of representation at senior levels when compared to men teachers.

The influence of husband and family on career was evident in the career moves teachers had made. One question asked for a list of moves made and the reasons for these. (A career move was defined as geographical, on promotion, out of, or back into teaching.)

There proved to be a strong sex connection between the reason for the move - women's moves were family related and men's moves were promotion related (see Table 4).

Table 4: Comparison of Overall Pattern of Career Moves

		Women %	Men %
Primary:	Family related mentions	43.1	22.9
	Promotion related mentions	21.1	62.4
Secondary:	Family related mentions	42.4	12.6
	Promotion related mentions	16.2	31.5

The difference between the services is apparent in the moves made by men - in the secondary service internal promotion, i.e. within the same school, is common.

While the information from this question is very general it has provided a useful indication of the reasons for career movement and the percentage giving no moves - primary 23% of women 18% of men, secondary 32% of women 39% of men - show that there is little sex linkage with lack of movement.

Promotion Experience

Teachers were asked how many times they had applied for a permanent promotion position and how many times promotion had been gained. Promotion was defined as a higher status position. The assertion has often been made that women don't apply for promotion and the data from earlier phases of the study [3][4] showed that women were not applying in the numbers to which they were eligible.

The survey data did show that the proportion of women who had never applied for promotion was indeed higher than that for men, however this fails to take into account the higher proportion of young women teachers who have had insufficient service to apply for promotion. When the correction was made to eliminate those with insufficient service from those who have never applied for promotion the position became clearer - 24% of eligible primary and 11% of eligible secondary women have not applied for promotion. (For men the proportions are 2% of secondary men and no primary men - some of whom had applied with insufficient service.)

While the proportion of women who have not applied is higher than for men, there remain 76% of the eligible primary women and 89% of the eligible secondary women who have made application for positions - what was their fate?

A further question asked how many times promotion had been gained. By excluding those who had never applied for promotion and dividing the positions gained by the positions applied for, a success rate can be calculated. While this measure is a crude one it does provide some interesting comparisons (see Table 5).

(3) The Changing Position of Women in Secondary Teaching in New Zealand - An Interim Statement. Department of Education.

(4) The Position of Women in Primary Teaching in New Zealand. Department of Education.

Table 5: Promotion Success Rates of Teachers by Sex and Service

Primary women	64.8%
Primary men	87.3%
Secondary women	88.5%
Secondary men	87.9%

It would appear that while secondary women have fared quite well, primary women have the lowest success rate. They are applying for positions but not achieving success at rates comparable with the other groups. The effect of this lack of success upon the women concerned can be but speculation and will be referred to later on in the paper.

A further question was asked. Teachers were asked to give reasons why they had not applied for promotion. The most common response (about half of both sexes) was insufficient service which was predictable given the high proportion of young teachers in both services. The second most frequent response was "happy where I am". This was made by 25% of primary women, 28% of primary men, 18% of secondary women and 29% of secondary men. This result would appear to refute the often made assertion that women are happy in basic scale positions and do not want promotion. It must be remembered, however, that the question was not restricted to those who had never applied for promotion and some responses could be from those who had advanced as far as they wished.

Other responses to the question were "family commitments" (from a higher proportion of women), "no position available", "extra money not worth the effort", and other personal reasons. In all 1032 of the 1829 teachers responded to the question.

Another factor relevant to promotion experience is encouragement to apply for promotion. Teachers were asked whether they had ever received encouragement to apply for a more senior position and who had provided this encouragement. In the primary service 34% of women and 48% of men teachers indentified receiving encouragement. (Those remaining answered "none" or "insufficient service".) In secondary the figures were 38% of women and 42% of men.

The sources of this encouragement showed some interesting similarities and differences. For primary teachers of both sexes the principal was the most frequently identified source (42% of women and 41% of men). The second most frequently mentioned source was inspectors, but by 29% of men and only 16% of women. For women a senior teacher ranked almost as high as inspector. The sex of the person providing the most encouragement was overwhelmingly male - 80% for men teachers and 77% for women. For secondary teachers, principals were again the most important source (43% of women and 36% of men). Inspectors were next for men (18%) and heads of department for women (12%). Of those receiving encouragement, 84% of men and 62% of women mentioned a male source.

Spouses were identified as a source of encouragement but by a higher proportion of men in both services. Women did not receive the same spouse support for promotion as men did.

Career Aspirations

Teachers were asked, "If you stay in teaching, which level would you like to reach?" Here the difference in aspiration level between the sexes is readily apparent (see Table 6) and would appear to sustain the assertion that women aren't interested in promotion - certainly as far as primary women are concerned.

Table 6: Aspiration Level of Teachers

Primary	Female %		Male %	
Assistant Teacher	32.3)	56.3	6.0	
Senior Teacher B1 and 2	24.0)		7.4	
Senior Teacher B3 or C1	8.1		6.4	
STJC	13.1		1.3	
Deputy Principal	3.4		7.0	
Principal - small school	6.3		24.5)	59.4
Principal - large school	3.7		34.9)	
Inspector	1.1		4.7	
Other	7.9		7.7	
Secondary				
Assistant Teacher	23.7)	51.0	10.3)	26.9
PR 1 or 2	27.3)		16.6)	
PR 3 or 4	16.8		28.3	
Senior Master/Mistress	12.9		6.7	
Deputy Principal	3.2		6.1	
Principal - small school	3.7)		13.3)	
Inspector	1.0)	8.4	2.8)	26.0
Principal - large school	3.7)		9.9)	
Other	7.8		6.1	

If several other indicators are taken into account this evidence can be considered not as indication of preference but as a realistic assessment of the level women think they can reach. The lower success rate of the primary women, covered previously, could have had some influence on their response to this question. Similarly the differential encouragement to apply for promotion received by women could also colour their aspiration level.

There is yet another indicator which can be considered. Teachers were asked what factors they thought ought to favour promotion and what factors did favour promotion. (A first and second choice was given for each and twenty options including "other" were provided.) The difference between the teachers' perceptions of the actual and their thoughts of the ideal was staggering. Most teachers thought teaching ability ought to favour promotion but few thought it did (see Table 7).

Table 7: Teaching Ability as a Promotion Factor

Percentage of responses (first choice) by sex and service.

	Ought to Favour Promotion	Does Favour Promotion
Primary women	86.2%	8.5%
Secondary women	79.3%	11.7%
Primary men	79.2%	23.9%
Secondary men	65.7%	16.4%

Identification of the factors which do favour promotion was less clear cut. The most frequent mentions were:-

1. Length of teaching service: from 42% of primary women
   28% of primary men
   15% of secondary women
   9% of secondary men

2. Conformity with Inspectors advice and guidance:
   from 26% of primary men
   24% of primary women

3. Good relationships with principal: from 19% of secondary men
   19% of secondary women

4. Teaching ability: from 24% of primary men
   16% of secondary men
   12% of secondary women
   9% of primary women

The perceived importance of inspectors in primary and principals in secondary reflects the difference between the promotion system of the two services.

If the teacher perceptions are correct, and the factors most commonly mentioned do favour promotion, then they must be examined to see whether they favour one sex more than the other.

1. Length of teaching service: Men have longer service and will therefore fare better.

2. Conformity with inspectors advice and guidance: From the evidence of an earlier phase of the study[5] it would appear that men fare better from their personal assessment by inspectors. The survey data shows men see inspectors providing more promotion encouragement than do women.

3. Good relationship with principal: The fact that most secondary school principals are male does not necessarily mean that they will favour men teachers at the expense of women, however women teachers could find promotion more difficult at schools where the principal has a sexist attitude.

4. Teaching ability: A knowledge of the promotion systems is required to analyse this factor. In primary teaching personal assessment (grading) provides some indication of teaching ability. This is carried out by members of the predominantly male primary inspectorate. In the secondary system the application form and referees' reports cannot provide a measure of teaching ability. An earlier phase of the study[6] showed that internal appointments to positions of responsibility were prevalent and therefore the opinion of the principal is crucial.

This evidence would suggest that men teachers are more favoured by these factors identified by teachers as favouring promotion.

(5) The Position of Women in Primary Teaching in New Zealand.
(6) The Position of Women in Secondary Teaching in New Zealand.

Conclusion

This paper has focussed on only four aspects of the questionnaire survey and presents a far from complete picture of the position of women in primary and secondary teaching.

It has shown that many of the reasons usually given to explain why there are not more women in senior positions have not been sustained by the survey data. The constraints which operate against women are not necessarily family related. Are women teachers themselves not wanting to advance in the profession or is their lower aspiration level a result of conditioning from their experience in the teaching system?